

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-11 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00

CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 OMB-01 SAB-01 /077 W

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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7198

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

:AMEMBASSY CAIRO 1335

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USIA WASHDC

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 2187

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR SY LE

SUBJ: APRIL 11 SYRIAN MEDIA REPORTING ON LEBANON

1. PRINCIPAL THEME OF APRIL 11 DAMASCUS PRESS WAS
EXPRESSION OF SATISFACTION AT "IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
FIRST STEP OF THE SYRIAN INITIATIVE", I.E. THE
UNANIMOUS APPROVAL BY THE LEBANESE PARLIAMENT OF AMENDMENT
TO THE LEBANESE CONSTITUTION.

2. TWO LEBANESE DELEGATIONS VISITED DAMASCUS YESTERDAY,
THE SUPREME ISLAMIC COUNCIL, WHICH CALL ON ASAD AND
FONMIN KHADDAM, AND A DELEGATION OF LEBANESE CITIZENS FROM
THE BEQAA VALLEY. TO LATTER, NATIONAL COUNCIL MEMBER
SUKKARIYYAH TOOK PASSING SWIPE AT US STATING SYRIA WILL
SPARE NO EFFORT IN ASSIST LEBANON TO "FOIL THE AMERICAN
ZIONIST CONSPIRACY DIRECTED AGAINST LEBANON'S ARABISM AND
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SOVERIEGHTY."

3. SENATOR ABU RIZK WAS QUOTED APPROVINGLY AS PRAISING THE "RESPONSIBLE ROLE" OF SYRIA AND THE PLO DURING THE LEBANESE CRISIS. BOTH PAPERS ALSO QUOTED FROM "BEIRUT AL MASA ARTICLE ATTACKING SADAT FOR "INCITING CONTINUED FIGHTING IN LEBANON TO UNDERMINE THE SOLID RELATIONS BETWEEN SYRIA AND THE PLO AS WELL AS TO COVER UP HIS NON-AGGRESSION AGREEMENT WITH ISRAEL."

4. IN EDITORIAL COMMENT AL-THAWRA URGED THAT LEBANESE NOT LET DIFFERENCES OF OPINION OVER WHO SHOULD BE THEIR NEXT PRESIDENT DELAY THEIR CHOICE. SUCH DELAY "WOULD ONLY GIVE CHANCE TO LEBANON'S ENEMIES AND ITS ARABISM TO IMPEDE THE SETTLEMENT... AND TO RESTOKE THE CONFLICT THAT WOULD SERVE THEIR PURPOSES OF ARABIZING OR INTERNATIONALIZING THE CRISIS SO AS TO IMPLEMENT THEIR PLOT AGAINST LEBANON AND THE ARAB NATION." SYRIA, THE EDITORIAL CONCLUDED, WILL PURSUE ITS "COOPERATION WITH ALL THE LEBANESE TO RESTORE NORMAL LIFE IN LEBANON." AL-BAATH NOTED THAT WHILE SYRIA DOES NOT EXPECT THANKS FOR ALL THE AID AND SACRIFICES IT HAS OFFERED TO LEBANON, "IT EXPECTS FROM THE NEW LEBANESE PRESIDENT FULL COOPERATION SERVING LEBANON AND THE GOALS OF THE ARAB STRUGGLE AND ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR THE PALESTINIAN REVOLUTION."
MURPHY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, POLITICAL SITUATION, CIVIL DISORDERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 11 APR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976DAMASC02187
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760138-0078
From: DAMASCUS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760474/aaaackui.tel
Line Count: 85
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: oatisao
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 18 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <18 JUN 2004 by SilvaL0>; APPROVED <27 AUG 2004 by oatisao>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: APRIL 11 SYRIAN MEDIA REPORTING ON LEBANON
TAGS: PFOR, PORS, SOPN, SY, LE
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006